

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the present application:

1-28. (Canceled)

29. (Currently amended) A method comprising:

using a storage system management application to manage information relating to operation of a plurality of storage servers;

using a first agent processing system which is separate from the storage system management application to scan a first subset of a hierarchical structure of data maintained by a storage server of the plurality of storage servers, to collect information about the first subset;

using a second agent processing system which is separate from the storage system management application to scan a second subset of the hierarchical structure of data maintained by the storage server, to collect information about the second subset;

storing the information about the first subset and the information about the second subset in a physical storage facility which is accessible by ~~an~~ the storage system management application for display to a user; and

using the storage system management application to access the physical storage facility and to generate an output to a user which is indicative of the information about the first subset and the information about the second subset.

30. (Previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the hierarchical structure of data is a directory structure of data stored by the storage server.

31. (Currently amended) The method of claim 29, wherein the first agent processing system uses a first file system and the second agent processing system uses a second file system which is different from the first file system.

32. (Previously presented) The method of claim 31, wherein the first file system comprises a network file system (NFS) and the second file system comprises a common Internet file system (CIFS).

33. (Previously presented) The method of claim 31, wherein said storing comprises storing the information about the first subset and the information about the second subset in the same format.

34. (Previously presented) The method of claim 33, wherein said format is a non-file-system-specific format.

35. (Previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein said storing comprises storing the information about the first subset and the information about the second subset on a database server.

36. (Previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein said storing comprises storing the information about the first subset in a first table and storing the information about the second subset in a second table.

37. (Previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein said storing comprises storing the information about the first subset and the information about the second subset in a single table.

38. (Previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein said storing comprises storing the information about the first subset and the information about the second subset in a histogram.

39. (Currently amended) A system comprising:

a storage server coupled to maintain a volume of data, the storage server ~~maintaining~~ and to maintain a directory structure of the volume;

a first agent processing system coupled to the storage server, to scan a first subset of the directory structure of the volume to collect information about the first subset;

a second agent processing system coupled to the storage server, to scan a second subset of the directory structure of the volume to collect information about the second subset; and

a database server coupled to the first agent processing system and the second agent processing system, to store the information about the first subset and the information about the second subset in a physical storage facility.

40. (Currently amended) The system of claim 39, further comprising:

a storage system management application coupled to the storage server and the first and second ~~agents~~ agent processing systems, to control the first and second ~~agents~~ agent processing systems.

41. (Previously presented) The system of claim 40, wherein the storage system management application generates a graphical user interface (GUI).

42. (Previously presented) The system of claim 39, wherein the database server stores the first and second information in a table.

43. (Previously presented) The system of claim 39, wherein the database server stores the first and the second information as a histogram.

44. (Currently amended) The system of claim 39, wherein the first agent processing system uses a first file system and the second agent processing system uses a second file system which is different from the first file system.

45. (Previously presented) The system of claim 44, wherein the database server stores the information about the first subset and the information about the second subset in the same format.

46. (Previously presented) The system of claim 44, wherein the database server stores the information about the first subset and the information about the second subset in a non-file-system-specific format.

47. (Previously presented) The system of claim 39, wherein the first file system comprises a network file system (NFS) and the second file system comprises a common Internet file system (CIFS).

48. (Currently amended) A system comprising:

a storage server to maintain a volume of data, including to maintain a directory structure of the volume of data;

a first agent processing system which uses a first file system, to scan a first subset of the directory structure of the volume to collect information about the first subset;

a second agent processing system which ~~use~~uses a second file system different from the first file system, to scan a second subset of the directory structure of the volume to collect information about the second subset;

a storage facility coupled to the first agent processing system and the second agent processing system, to store the information about the first subset and the information about the second subset in the same format; and

a management application coupled to the storage server and the first and second ~~agents~~agent processing systems, to control the first and second ~~agents~~agent processing systems.

49. (Previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein said format is a non-file-system-specific format.

50. (Previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein the first file system comprises a network file system (NFS) and the second file system comprises a common Internet file system (CIFS).

51. (Previously presented) The system of claim 48, further comprising:
a database server to maintain the storage facility.
52. (Previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein the management application generates a graphical user interface (GUI).
53. (Previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein the database server stores the first and second information in at least one table.
54. (Previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein the database server stores the first and second information as at least one histogram.
55. (New) The method of claim 29, wherein the first agent processing system and the second agent processing system are controlled by the storage system management application.